

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

SPECIAL ORDER NO. 32

August 1, 2003

**SUBJECT: DISPLAY OF THE AMERICAN FLAG ON DEPARTMENT VEHICLES
AND UNIFORMS**

PURPOSE: The tragic events of September 11, 2001 brought a heightened awareness to patriotism and a desire to display the American Flag on Department vehicles and uniforms. As a result, the California legislature passed Government Code Section 434.5, which allows for the display of the American Flag on Department vehicles and uniforms.

The display of the American Flag is a symbol of our freedom and represents a living country and itself, considered a living thing. Therefore, the symbol should be respected and the sanctity maintained by following the proper protocol for displaying the American Flag. The United States Code, Title 36, Chapter 10, Section 175 (c) and 176 (e) states in part:

The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle...The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.

The purpose of this Order is to standardize how the American Flag is displayed on Department vehicles and worn on the Department uniform to maintain its sanctity and conformity with existing codes and protocol for the proper display.

PROCEDURE:

I. DISPLAY OF THE AMERICAN FLAG ON DEPARTMENT VEHICLES.

A. Marked Department Vehicles.

All black and white police vehicles, motorcycles, and any other vehicle with Department markings, will be supplied with an American Flag decal. The decal shall be installed uniformly on all vehicles by Motor Transport Division (MTD), as determined by the Fleet Management Committee (FMC).

Note: Requests for the display of other American Flags on Department vehicles shall be submitted via an Employee's Report, Form 15.7, to the FMC, via the respective chain of command.

B. Unmarked Department Vehicles.

For unmarked vehicles, the commanding officer that is responsible for those vehicles shall determine whether the display of the American Flag on those unmarked vehicles is appropriate, considering the assignment and responsibilities of the personnel assigned to his/her command. The decal shall be installed uniformly on all vehicles by MTD, as determined by the FMC.

Note: If the commanding officer responsible for unmarked vehicles approves the display of the American Flag decal, an Intradepartmental Correspondence, Form 15.2, shall be forwarded to MTD specifying the vehicle authorized for the display.

II. DISPLAY OF THE AMERICAN FLAG ON DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL.

All Department Personnel. All Department personnel may wear a miniature enameled American Flag pin or the DARE America pin on their uniform or civilian attire. For uniformed personnel, the pin is to be worn on the uniform left breast pocket flap, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch below the top seam and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in from the outside edge of the flap. For non-uniformed personnel, the pin is to be worn on their left lapel of the outer most garment.

Note: Requests for the display of other American Flags on the uniform shall be directed via an Employee's Report, Form 15.7, to the Uniform Committee, via the respective chain of command.

III. MOTOR TRANSPORT DIVISION'S RESPONSIBILITY. Motor Transport Division shall affix the American Flag decal, as determined by the FMC, on all black and white police vehicles, motorcycles, unmarked vehicles and other vehicles with Department markings.

Note: Prior to placing the American Flag decal on unmarked vehicles, MTD shall ensure that prior approval has been obtained from the commanding officer responsible for those vehicles.

AMENDMENTS: This Order adds Section 3/234.40 of the Department Manual and revises Sections 3/639.40 and 3/639.60.

AUDIT RESPONSIBILITY: The Commanding Officer of Fiscal and Technical Services Bureau shall monitor compliance with this directive in accordance with Department Manual Section 0/080.00.

WILLIAM J. BRATTON
Chief of Police

DISTRIBUTION "D"